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SUBJECT: DDR IN KATANGA: DESPITE DESIRE TO DISARM,
REINTEGRATION ELUDES MANY

REF: KINSHASA 153

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programs (DDR) remain in disarray in the Katanga province, as they are throughout the DRC. Mai Mai fighters already certified for inclusion in the government's DDR program continue to wait, and those not yet certified are ignored. Meanwhile, stop-gap programs providing a fraction of the official benefits have created competing reintegration schemes. Neither approach has been effective in returning members of these volatile groups to a stable civilian environment. End summary.

MAI MAI FIGHTERS ABANDONED

¶2. (SBU) During a recent visit to Katanga, Poloff observed that the pace of the Congolese government's program to disarm and reintegrate former Mai Mai fighters into civilian communities has been glacial. According to the Kalemie representative of the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reinsertion (CONADER), only 600 of approximately 7,000 identified Mai Mai ex-combatants have successfully passed through its demobilization process. He said the majority of Katangan ex-combatants would like to return to civilian life, but poverty, lack of skills, and absence of job opportunities prevent them from doing so.

CONADER UNABLE TO MANAGE THE PROCESS

¶3. (SBU) As reported in reftel B, CONADER has been largely ineffective in its management of the DDR process throughout the DRC, and Katanga is no different. But CONADER is quick to claim that many of the problems and delays in Katanga are the fault of others. CONADER had the obligation of certifying, along with the Mai Mai chiefs, whether or not claimants were actually combatants before confirming them as eligible for assistance. The CONADER representative alleged that many of the Mai Mai leaders and villagers in Katanga have been running extortion rings. It is a lucrative arrangement for the Mai Mai chiefs to "certify" that a group of villagers are members of their militias -- and then demand up to half of the disarmament payout as a kickback from the intended beneficiary. Under this logic, delays in certification and provision of service are inevitable due to large numbers of allegedly false claims.

¶4. (SBU) CONADER initially provided each ex-combatant an

immediate payment of \$110 for urgent needs, plus a monthly stipend and entry/exit "kits" consisting of food, shelter materials, and some livelihood training. However, when the backlog of ex-combatants swamped CONADER's capacity, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) developed an alternative response called the Community Relief in Katanga (CRK) program. The CRK provides merely \$20 -- about the cost of transport for a fighter and his family back to their home village. The payment is accompanied by the promise of inclusion in any future GDRC reintegration programs, if and when they become functional.

15. (SBU) In late December, CONADER initiated mobile teams to locate remote groups which had been previously certified for demobilization. According to the head of MONUC's Lubumbashi office, CONADER was making one-off payments of \$300 -- representing the \$110 initial payment plus an accrued monthly stipend and a token towards reintegration -- to each of 600 "certified" Mai Mai fighters in Mitwaba alone. At the same time, the UNDP was making its \$20 payments to different groups of Mai Mai fighters in the same region.

COMMENT

16. (SBU) The problems faced by those wishing to disarm in Katanga are just one example of the difficulties with DDR throughout the DRC. CONADER's operational problems must be sorted out if it is to continue, or the agency must be replaced with a more effective mechanism for managing the complex and critical process of DDR. End comment.
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